Besides the simple needs of life, preservation of the self and the race, another motive of the Magyar folk customs is stressed by some authors: the urge to assert oneself in the society. Since wealth is the main source of respect in Magyar society, certain conventional outward signs of wealth (such as the year and make of the family car in the United States) are emphasized by many people, even to the extent that they far exceed their means in order to keep up appearances. Such outward signs of wealth are the furniture of the main living room, especially the elaborateness of the decorated bed, and the holiday attire. People who wear rags for six days of the week, may don on the seventh hand embroidered pieces of clothing whose value may exceed several months' income. Weddings are social events that usually require far greater financial sacrifice than one might call reasonable. In small villages, all the inhabitants are invited, without exception, or in towns, the entire street is invited. On such occasions the peasant, who usually economizes on his food to keep his animals in better condition, slaughters, without regret, pigs, sheep, calves and even beef cattle, not to speak of dozens of fowl--all for the wedding feast. Pastry, usually a Sunday treat on the farm, is served in a wide variety and abundance.

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